



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

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GOVERNOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SPONSORS TOBACCO CONTROL CONFERENCE**

Hawaii continues to make progress in reducing the harmful health and economic effects of tobacco use. The passage of Hawaii's landmark smoke free workplace and public places law in 2006 helped to "clear the air" from exposure to secondhand smoke. And despite relatively low youth and adult smoking rates, a cigarette excise tax that discourages consumption, the Hawaii Tobacco Quitline, and a statewide network of community-based advocates, there remains much work to do.

On May 1, the Department of Health Tobacco Prevention & Education Program will sponsor a conference entitled ***After the Smoke Clears: Facing the Next Challenges in Tobacco Control***. The conference, will be held at the Hilton Waikiki Prince Kuhio Hotel, will bring together Hawaii's community members and health professionals to increase their effectiveness in tobacco control and focus on the challenges that remain in Hawaii in the years ahead.

"Hawaii's successes in tobacco control are definitely noteworthy. However, there are still 170,000 smokers in Hawaii, of which a vast majority have expressed a desire to quit but have not," said Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "Our youth can still purchase tobacco products illegally, and there are populations who smoke at rates higher than the state average."

The conference sessions will help to identify disparate groups in Hawaii and provide new information on how to reach them. Breakout sessions will address Native Hawaiian tobacco use, engaging youth in tobacco control, treating tobacco dependence, protecting families from secondhand smoke in the home, strategies for reaching young adults smokers, tobacco treatment for consumers with mental illness and building a stronger tobacco control movement in Hawaii.

(more)

This year's conference will feature national and international experts in tobacco control. Keynote speaker Lorraine Greaves, PhD, President of the International Network of Women Against Tobacco, will share her work on gender equity and tobacco control. The conference will give Hawaii's tobacco control community an opportunity to learn from nationally recognized experts, such as:

- Shu-Hong Zhu, PhD, of the University of California School of Medicine, San Diego who will share effective cessation approaches for different ethnic groups,
- Linda Hancock, PhD, who will speak about the tobacco industry's marketing tactics and targets,
- Bruce Christianson, PhD, of the University of Wisconsin Department of Medicine & Public Health, who will give the audience an overview of new 2008 National Clinical Guidelines for Smoking Cessation,
- Mitchell Nids, PhD, UCLA School of Medicine who will address new medications for smoking cessation,
- Jill Williams, MD, who will speak about tobacco and the mentally ill, and
- James Bergman, JD, Smoke-Free Environments Law Project, who will discuss the next frontier in eliminating exposure to secondhand smoke.

"In Hawaii, over 1,100 people die each year due to smoking-related illnesses," stated Fukino. "The conference provides an important opportunity for our community-based advocates and agency partners to learn about prevention and cessation efforts to further reduce the burden of tobacco use in Hawaii."

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**Notice to news media:**

The ***After the Smoke Clears: Facing the Next Challenges in Tobacco Control*** conference will be held on Thursday, May 1, 2008, from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm at the Hilton Waikiki Prince Kuhio Hotel (2500 Kuhio Avenue). Interviews with any of the above mentioned speakers can be arranged during the conference breaks from 10:15 am – 10:45 am and 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm. See contact information below.

For more information, contact:

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